

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1 1. (Currently amended): A method for obtaining postage comprising:
2 accessing a first web server from a client system by communicating ~~first HTML~~
3 ~~content~~ a first request to said first web server;
4 ~~receiving second HTML content from said first web server, said second HTML~~
5 ~~content including postage-related content~~ in response to said first request, generating first HTML
6 content at said first web server and communicating said first HTML content to said client
7 system, said first HTML content containing postage-related content for obtaining postage;
8 displaying said ~~second~~ first HTML content at said client system;
9 detecting user input ~~in the form of third HTML content indicating~~ at said client
10 system which indicates a selection of postage, said selection of postage being based at least on
11 said postage-related content; and
12 ~~in response to said detecting, communicating fourth HTML content~~ a second
13 request from said client system to said first web server, said first web server generating second
14 HTML content containing information for printing an indicium in response to said second
15 request, said information for printing an indicium being generated at a second web server
16 separate from said first web server and communicated from said second web server to said first
17 web server, said client system and receiving from said first web server said information for
18 printing an indicium from a second web server including an exchange of secured socket layer
19 (SSL) protocol data between said first web server and said second web server.
2. (Canceled)
- 1 3. (Original): The method of claim 1 further including printing said
2 information for printing an indicium on a printable medium.

1 4. (Original): The method of claim 3 wherein said receiving said
2 information for printing an indicium includes receiving a printing software component, said
3 printing including executing said printing software component.

1 5. (Original): The method of claim 3 wherein said printing is initiated in
2 response to said receiving said information for printing an indicium, absent user intervention.

1 6. (Original): The method of claim 3 wherein said printing is initiated in
2 response to a user request to print said information for printing an indicium.

1 7. (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said information for printing
2 an indicium is a bitmap image.

1 8. (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said information for printing
2 an indicium is postage indicium data.

1 9. (Original): The method of claim 1 further including selecting a
2 background image, said background image to be combined with said information for printing an
3 indicium.

1 10. (Original): The method of claim 1 further including sending a background
2 image to said first server, said receiving said information for printing an indicium including
3 incorporation of said background image to said information for printing an indicium.

1 11. (Canceled)

1 12. (Original): The method of claim 1 wherein said second server is a postal
2 server.

1 13. (Currently amended): A computer program product for obtaining postage,
2 said computer program product executing on a data processor of a client system, the computer
3 program product comprising:

4 code configured to operate a said data processor to perform a step of accessing a
5 first server by communicating ~~first hypertext mark-up language (HTML) content~~ a first request to
6 said first web server;

7 code configured to operate a said data processor to perform a step of receiving
8 ~~second-first~~ HTML content from said first server, said ~~second-first~~ HTML content including
9 postage-related content for obtaining postage;

10 code configured to operate a said data processor to perform a step of displaying
11 said ~~second-first~~ HTML content;

12 code configured to operate a said data processor to perform a step of detecting
13 user input ~~in the form of third HTML content~~ indicating selection of postage ~~said postage-related~~
14 ~~content~~;

15 code configured to operate a said data processor to perform a step of
16 communicating ~~fourth HTML content~~ a second request in connection with said user input to said
17 first server, said first server generating second HTML content containing information for
18 printing an indicium in response to said second request, said information for printing an indicium
19 being generated at a second server that is separate from said first server and communicated from
20 said second server to said first server ~~and receiving from said first server information configured~~
21 ~~to operate a data processor to perform a step of printing an indicium, said information being~~
22 ~~obtained via an interaction between said first server and a second server involving an exchange~~
23 ~~of SSL protocols between said first eb server and said second server, in response to said~~
24 ~~detecting~~; and

25 a computer-readable medium for storing said codes;

26 ~~wherein the second server is configured as a web server.~~

1 14. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 wherein said code
2 for detecting includes code for transmitting said user input to said first server.

1 15. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 further including
2 code for printing said information for printing an indicium on a printable medium.

1 16. (Original): The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said code
2 for receiving includes code for receiving a printing software component, said code for printing
3 including code for executing said printing software component.

1 17. (Original): The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said code
2 for printing is initiated in response to receiving said information for printing an indicium, absent
3 user intervention.

1 18. (Original): The computer program product of claim 15 wherein said code
2 for printing is initiated in response to a user request to print said information for printing an
3 indicium.

1 19. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 wherein said
2 information for printing an indicium comprises a bitmap image.

1 20. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 wherein said
2 information for printing an indicium comprises postage indicium data.

1 21. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 further including
2 code for receiving a background image from said first server, said background image to be
3 combined with said information for printing an indicium.

1 22. (Original): The computer program product of claim 13 further including
2 code for sending a background image to said first server, said first server combining said
3 background image with said information for printing an indicium.

1 23. (Currently amended): A method for dispensing postage comprising:
2 receiving first ~~HTML content comprising~~ requests for postage from one or more
3 users at a first server system;
4 ~~exchanging one or more SSL protocol messages in response to receiving said one~~
5 ~~or more requests for postage, communicating with a second server system that is separate from~~
6 ~~said first server system~~, including communicating said requests for postage to said second server,
7 said second server system generating information for printing indicia and providing said
8 information for printing indicia to said first server system;
9 receiving said information for printing indicia from said second server system;
10 and
11 ~~communicating at said first server system, generating~~ second HTML content
12 containing said information for printing indicia and communicating it to said one or more users
13 to satisfy said requests for postage;
14 ~~wherein said second server system is configured as a web server to receive said~~
15 ~~requests for postage from said first server.~~

1 24. (Original): The method of claim 23 further including receiving user-
2 provided information from said one or more users relating to a payment mechanism, wherein
3 said requests for postage each includes a user-provided information, wherein said providing
4 information for printing indicia includes verifying payment of said postage based on said user-
5 provided information.

1 25. (Original): The method of claim 24 wherein said user-provided
2 information is credit card information.

1 26. (Original): The method of claim 23 wherein said requests for postage
2 each includes a payment mechanism associated with said first server system, wherein said
3 providing information for printing indicia includes verifying payment of said postage based on
4 said payment mechanism.

1 27. (Original): The method of claim 23 wherein said information for printing
2 indicia comprises one or more bitmap images.

1 28. (Original): The method of claim 23 wherein said information for printing
2 indicia comprises one or more postage indicium data.

1 29. (Original): The method of claim 23 further including providing
2 background image information for enhancing said information for printing indicia.

1 30. (Original): The method of claim 23 wherein said communicating is based
2 on XML protocols.

1 31. (Original): The method of claim 23 wherein said second server system
2 transmits a postage printing software component to said first server system.

32-41. (Canceled)

1 42. (Currently amended): A method for distributing postage comprising:
2 providing a first server system configured as a web server;
3 providing a second server system configured as a web server separate from said
4 first server system;

5 receiving, at said first server system, requests for postage from users ~~in the form~~
6 ~~of HTML content~~;

7 sending said requests for postage to said second server system ~~using SSL~~
8 ~~protocol~~, including providing a payment mechanism to pay for said postage;

9 generating postage at said second server system; and

10 dispensing said postage from said second server system to said first server system
11 ~~using SSL protocol~~, including transmitting postage indicia to said first server system and
12 validating payment for said postage based on said payment mechanism; and

13 generating HTML content containing said postage indicia and distributing said
14 ~~postage-HTML content~~ from said first server system ~~in the form of HTML content~~ to satisfy said
15 requests for postage.

1 43. (Original): The method of claim 42 wherein said requests for postage
2 each includes a user-provided payment mechanism.

1 44. (Original): The method of claim 42 wherein said requests for postage
2 each includes a payment mechanism associated only with said first server system.

1 45. (~~Original~~Currently amended): The method of claim 42 wherein said
2 ~~distributing said postage indicia includes is a step of transmitting~~ information for printing said
3 postage indicia~~one or more indicia to said users.~~

 46 and 47. (Canceled)

1 48. (~~Original~~Currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[47]]~~42 wherein said
2 postage request is based on a single request for postage.

1 49. (~~Original~~Currently amended): The method of claim ~~[[47]]~~42 wherein said
2 postage request is based on more than one request for postage.

1 50. (Original): The method of claim 42 wherein said distributing said postage
2 includes transmitting a postage printing software component.

1 51. (Previously presented): The method of claim 42 wherein said second
2 server is a postal server.

1 52. (Original): The method of claim 42 wherein said second server system
2 dispenses postage in the form of information for printing one or more indicia.

1 53. (Original): The method of claim 52 wherein said information for printing
2 one or more indicia comprises one or more bitmap images.

1 54. (Original): The method of claim 52 wherein said information for printing
2 one or more indicia comprises postage indicium data.

1 55. (Original): The method of claim 52 further including providing one or
2 more background images for selection by said users; said distributing said postage including
3 combining one or more selected ones of said background images with said information for
4 printing one or more indicia.

1 56. (Currently amended): A system for distributing postage to plural users,
2 comprising:

3 a postal server system comprising a web server component;

4 a first server system separate from said postal server system and in
5 communication therewith over a data communication network using SSL protocol; and

6 a second server system separate from said postal server system and in
7 communication therewith over said data communication network using SSL protocol,

8 said first and second server systems each configured to receive postage requests
9 from users for purchasing postage ~~in the form of HTML content~~,

10 said first and second server systems each further configured to generate and send
11 requests to said postal server system in the form of SSL protocol to obtain postage from said
12 postal server system, wherein said web server component receives said requests,

13 said postal server system generating postage in response to requests received from
14 said first and second server systems,

15 said first and second server systems each further configured to generate HTML
16 content containing said postage and to transmit said postage to said users in the form of HTML
17 content to said users, thereby satisfying said postage requests.

1 57. (Original): The system of claim 56 wherein said postage comprises
2 information for printing indicia.

1 58. (Previously presented): The system of claim 57 wherein said information
2 for printing indicia comprises postage indicium data.

1 59. (Previously presented): The system of claim 57 wherein said information
2 for printing indicia comprises bitmap information.

60. (Previously presented): The system of claim 56 wherein said first server system is configured to include a user-provided payment mechanism in its requests to obtain postage.

61. (Previously presented): The system of claim 60 wherein said payment mechanism is a credit card.

62. (Original): The system of claim 56 wherein said first server system includes a payment mechanism, said first server system configured to include said payment mechanism in its requests to obtain postage, said payment mechanism being associated with said first server system.

63. (Original): The method of claim 56 wherein said data communication network includes a secure communication channel.

64. (Previously presented): The method of claim 63 wherein said secure communication channel is based on a data transmission protocol, including XML protocol.

65. (Previously presented): The method of claim 63 wherein said secure communication channel is a land line.